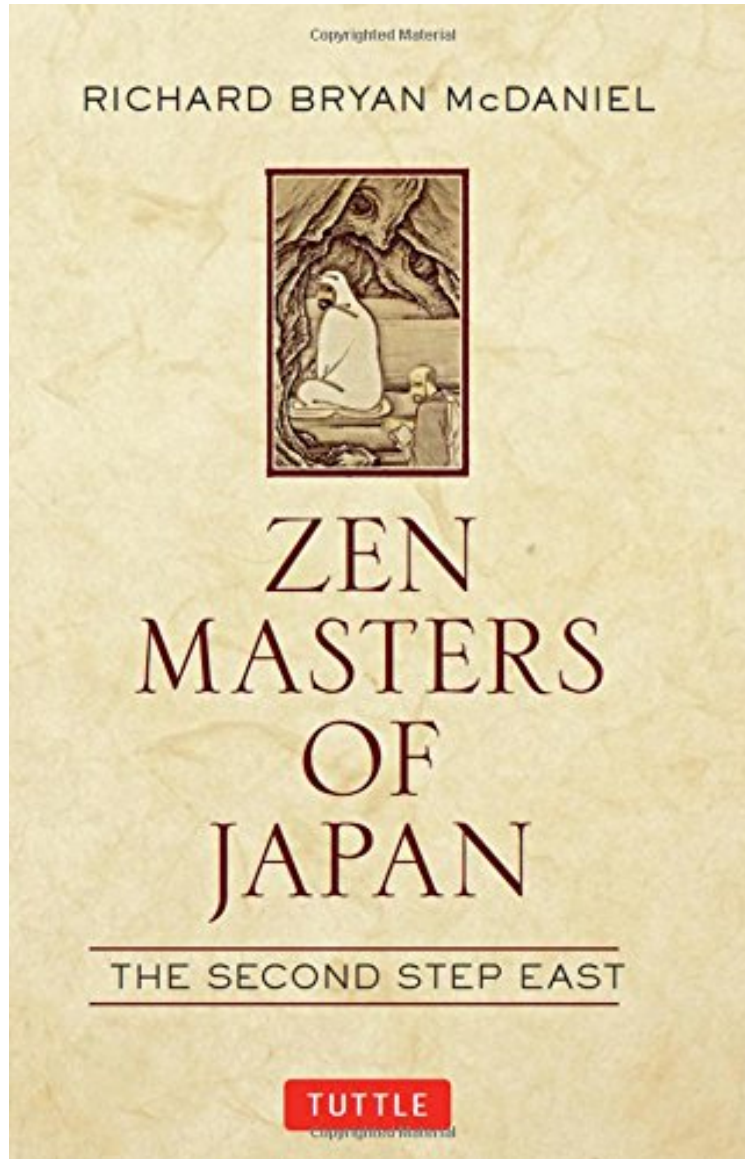


(Get free) Zen Masters of Japan: The Second Step East

## Zen Masters of Japan: The Second Step East

*Richard Bryan McDaniel*

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**Richard Bryan McDaniel : Zen Masters of Japan: The Second Step East** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Zen Masters of Japan: The Second Step East:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By David P. Shapiro Nice overview..well written and great seller  
0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent! By Daigu I am waiting already for the third volume, the sequence is of great value not only for practitioners but also for students and scholars and those interested in the

evolution and transmission of the teachings since the historical Buddha to our present time.<sup>6</sup> of 8 people found the following review helpful. A Chronicle of the Japanese Zen Masters By Seth Zuih Segall Richard Bryan McDaniel's Zen Masters of Japan: The Second Step East is clearly a labor of love -- part of a three book series (Zen Masters of China, Zen Masters of Japan, and the upcoming Zen Masters of the West) that presents a chronicle of the lives of some of the most important Japanese Zen teachers. The book begins -- after a brief prologue in China-- with the earliest Japanese pilgrims who brought Zen from China to Japan, and concludes with Soyen Shaku's 1893 visit to the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. The book's prose is clear, clean and uncluttered, and a pleasure to read. The wisdom, poetry, and wit of the Zen ancestors -- Japanese Zen patriarchs like Dogen, Hakuin, Basho and Ryokan -- comes shining through. McDaniel frames the lives of these Zen masters in their cultural and historical context, so that the reader painlessly absorbs a reasonable amount of Japanese culture and history along the way. Who is this book right for? It occupies a peculiar niche. It contains too much information for someone just casually interested in Zen, and yet may not be scholarly enough for someone who's already well versed in it -- its ideal readers will be Zen enthusiasts/practitioners who know a little but not a lot about Japanese Zen history. As a reader, I'm somewhere in the middle of this continuum, so that I found myself both thankful to McDaniel for learning about Zen figures I'd never known and delighted by various nuggets of Zen lore and mondo (teacher-student dialogues) I'd either never known or had long forgotten, but also frustrated by the book's shortcomings. As a summation of stories already contained in a number of well-known English language publications (e.g., Ferguson, Dumoulin, Cleary, Suzuki, and Reys), the book lacks new scholarship, or a familiarity with their original Japanese sources. It often fails to distinguish between fact, as an historian might define it, and lore as it comes down through the Zen tradition -- what's biography and what's hagiography. It also presents Zen as Zen would like to present itself, without delving critically into what's lost and what's gained as Japanese Zen bows to political and economic pressures from shoguns, samurai, and nationalist Meiji restorers. And where, by the way, are the Zen matriarchs? Those criticisms aside, if you're a Zen practitioner just beginning your journey -- and you aren't too finicky about what's history and what's lore -- this book is a painless way to begin to familiarize yourself with Zen's Japanese history.

Zen Masters of Japan is the second book in a series that traces Zen's profoundly historic journey as it spread eastward from China and Japan, toward the United States. Following Zen Masters of China, this book concentrates on Zen's significant passage through Japan. More specifically, it describes the lineage of the great teachers, the Zen monk pioneers who set out to enlighten an island ready for an inner transformation based on compassionate awareness. While the existing Buddhist establishment in Japan met early Zen pioneers like Dogen and Eisai with fervent resistance, Zen Buddhism ultimately persevered and continued to become further transformed in its passage through Japan. The Japanese culture and Japanese Buddhism practices further deepened and strengthened Zen training by combining it with a variety of esoteric contemplative arts the arts of poetry, the tea ceremony, calligraphy, and archery. Zen Masters of Japan chronicles this journey with each Zen master profiled. The book shows how the new practices soon gained in popularity among all walks of life from the lowly peasant, offering a hope of reincarnation and a better life; to the Samurai warrior due to its casual approach to death; to the ruling classes, challenging the intelligentsia because of its scholarly roots. A collection of Zen stories, meditation, and their wisdom, Zen Masters of Japan also explores the illusive state of 'No Mind' achieved in Japan that is so fundamental to Zen practices today.

"McDaniel writes in a very straightforward, easy manner and eschews flaunting his Zen knowledge so beginners will find this easy-going. This would be a handsome volume on any Zen student's bookcase and is especially valuable for those new to the practice." The Zen Site "It is a testament to Zen Masters of Japan that it raises so many thorny issues. McDaniel says the pursuit of the Zen Ox requires Great Doubt, Great Perseverance and a willingness to engage in Dharma combat. At first glance, one might make the mistake of thinking this collection of short narratives is another twist on the Chicken Soup for the Soul series perhaps Miso Soup for the Buddhist Non-Soul. But that is not how Zen stories work. They're not fluffy, and they bite. Better get back on that meditation cushion" John Negru, editor of Sumeru-books.com About the Author Rick McDaniel taught at the University of New Brunswick and Saint Thomas University before working in International Development with the YMCA, where he was instrumental in creating the YMCA Peace Medallion. He is also the creator and driving force behind a five-part documentary series called '80/20: A Developing World' and coauthor of the textbook A Two Way Approach to Understanding: Issues in Global Education. Dr. McDaniel describes himself as a Roman Catholic by birth and heritage and a Zen practitioner by nature and temperament. He studies at the Montreal Zen Center with teacher Albert Low.